

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A power door latch assembly for engaging a door striker, comprising:

a ratchet for engaging the striker, the ratchet being rotatable between a closed position and an open position and including at least one detent surface and biasing member for biasing the ratchet towards the open position;

a pawl for engaging the at least one detent surface to selectively resist rotation of the ratchet towards the open position;

a rotary actuator for rotating the ratchet toward the closed position and for disengaging the pawl from the at least one detent surface;

a drive actuator including a prime mover, an output member in engagement with the rotary actuator, and a clutch coupled between the prime mover and the output member for selectively transferring torque between the prime mover and the rotary actuator;

B1 a drive controller for controlling the operation of the drive actuator, the drive controller being coupled to the clutch and being configured for disengaging the prime mover from the rotary actuator when the ratchet is disposed in one of the closed and open positions; and

said rotary actuator having a cinching arm engaging said ratchet upon rotation of said rotary actuator in a first sense to rotate the ratchet towards the closed position, and said rotary actuator having a relating arm engaging said pawl upon rotation of said rotary actuator in a second sense opposite said first sense to disengage the pawl from the at least one detent surface;

a release lever including an arm extending out therefrom, said release lever pivotally secured to said pawl such that said release lever rotates when said pawl rotates;

a first switch for selectively operating said clutch when said ratchet is disposed in the closed position, said first switch stopping said primary mover only when said first switch is closed; and

a second switch for starting operation of said prime mover, said second switch actuated by said arm of said release lever only when said pawl engages said detent surface.

2. (original) The power door latch assembly according to claim 1, wherein the rotary actuator is rotatable through a null position wherein the rotary actuator is disengaged from the ratchet and the pawl.

3. (original) The power door latch assembly according to claim 2, wherein the drive controller is configured for disengaging the prime mover from the rotary actuator when the rotary actuator is disposed in the null position.

4. (previously presented) The power door latch assembly according to claim 3, wherein the rotary actuator includes a lost motion linkage for allowing limited rotational movement of the ratchet relative to the rotary actuator when the ratchet is disposed in the open position.

5. (original) The power door latch assembly according to claim 4, wherein one of the at least one detent surfaces is disposed for providing in cooperation with the pawl a partially open position between the open and closed positions, and the limited rotational movement is provided between the open and partially open positions.

6. (cancelled)

7. (currently amended) The power door latch assembly according to claim 6 5, wherein said ratchet includes a cam surface disposed for engagement with the second switch when the ratchet is disposed in the closed position.

8. (previously presented) The power door latch assembly according to claim 7, including a manual release lever, and the pawl includes an arm coupled to the release lever for releasing the pawl from the ratchet upon activation of the release lever.

9. (previously presented) The power door latch assembly according to claim 8, wherein the ratchet is disposed for rotation about a first axis, and the pawl is disposed for rotation for about a fixed axis parallel to the first axis.

10. (original) The power door latch assembly according to claim 9, wherein the drive actuator is disposed for rotation about the first axis.

11. (cancelled)
